

July 10, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to ask that the FCC not impose new hidden charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

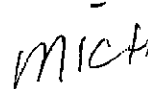
Minorities, lower-income families, senior citizens, immigrants, college students and military families rely upon calling card services for a variety of needs. Many of these consumers do not have the credit, bank accounts, or surplus cash to pay a large deposit for local telephone service. For these consumers, a prepaid card may be the only option they have to stay connected – to make phone calls to look for a job, for affordable housing, make a doctor's appointment, or stay in touch with family and friends. These cards offer convenience and predictable costs.

In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable for these and other consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden would fall squarely upon those consumers that can least afford to bear it. Adding access charges and fees will substantially increase the cost of providing pre-paid cards at affordable prices, jeopardizing the savings provided by these cards.

Please stop any effort to raise the costs of pre-paid calling card consumers by deciding that these services are not subject to exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,



ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator

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The Bell companies want to target those calls in which a caller uses a pre-paid calling card and dials a toll-free number, along with his or her PIN. The caller, who may be in Virginia, for example, is connected to a "platform" in another state -- let's say in Nebraska. From this "platform," he or she hears a message about a company, non-profit or person. The caller then dials the telephone number of someone in Virginia. Current rules, as well as common sense, state that this represents two calls, one from Virginia to Nebraska and one from Nebraska to Virginia. Both calls are subject to interstate access charges because there is a call to Nebraska and then a separate call to Virginia.

But the Bell companies want to treat this as a single in-state call so they can levy exorbitant in-state access charges. Such fees have no relationship whatsoever to the Bell companies' actual costs, which are only a fraction of what they want to charge consumers.

Prices are already rising for gas, milk and other products. Consumers don't need higher prices for phone calls too, especially when these higher rates represent a blatant giveaway to four large corporations.

I am aware that the long distance companies and others that sell pre-paid calling cards have weighed in with the FCC in an effort to protect their customers' interests in this manner. It is now time for the FCC to weigh in on the side of consumers and show the Bell companies the door on this issue.

Sincerely,

Larry Higgins

Phila PA 19135

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
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Sincerely, *Ruby Cowe, PA*

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
Senator
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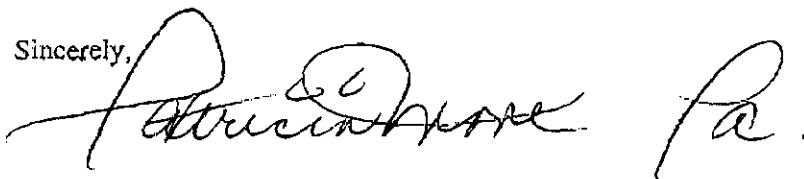
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patricia A. Abernathy".

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
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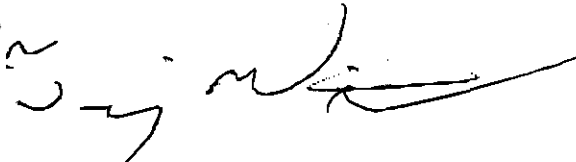
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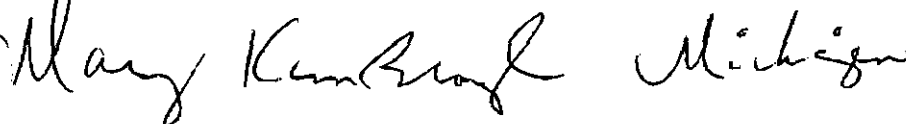
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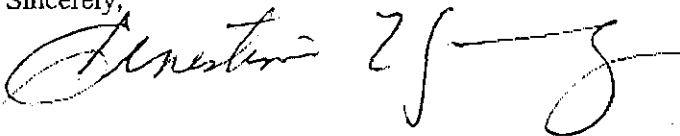
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Sincerely,

Mary Williams
Mary Williams
Mar-Gett he branch
MO

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
Senator
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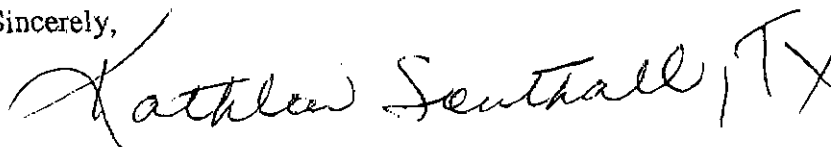
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In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable for these and other consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

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Please stop any effort to raise the costs of pre-paid calling card consumers by deciding that these services are not subject to exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Southall, TX". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the initials "TX" written at the end.

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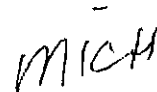
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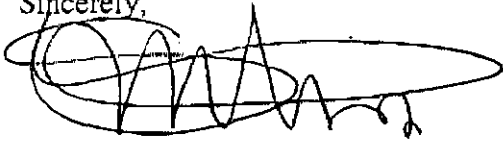
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Alabama

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
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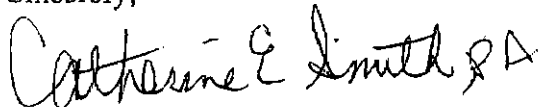
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Catherine E. Smith" followed by a stylized monogram or initials.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel J. Glick", followed by a large, stylized flourish or initial.

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
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Martha H. Davis
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In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable for these and other consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden would fall squarely upon those consumers that can least afford to bear it. Adding access charges and fees will substantially increase the cost of providing pre-paid cards at affordable prices, jeopardizing the savings provided by these cards.

Please stop any effort to raise the costs of pre-paid calling card consumers by deciding that these services are not subject to exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of William F. Band and initials KY.

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator

July 10, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

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Lettie M. Polite
Greenville, N.C.

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
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Commissioner Kevin Martin
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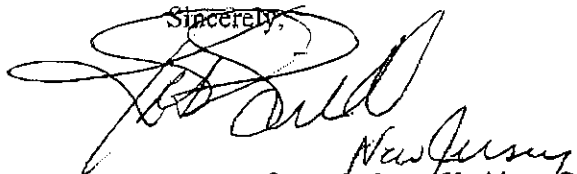
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CARL A. BOTKIN, LT USN
NAVSUBSCOL, GROTON, CT

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Senator
Senator

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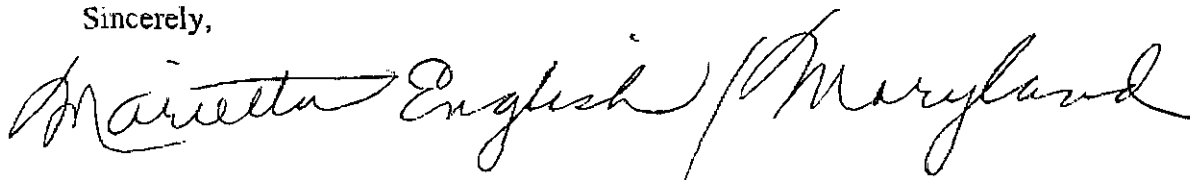
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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marietta English / Maryland". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the distribution list.

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
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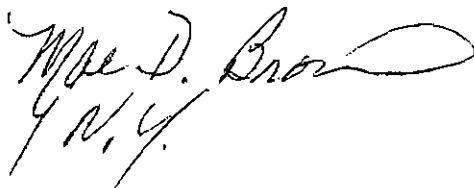
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Mae D. Brown
N.Y.

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sue Banta". To the right of the signature, the word "Kansas" is written in a stylized, cursive script.

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Phila Penna

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